Competition in Road Transport Industry

4523. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a recent report appearing in the Press has pointed out that the road transport industry is experiencing a slump due to tough competition from the railways and introduction of pipelines for movement of oil and gas;

(b) whether there is also a surplus of trucks as out of 28 lakh trucks on the road, 10 lakhs arc old enough to be made redundant but continue to operate; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to ensure that the road transport industry operates viably?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) to (c) Road Transport Industry is in the private sector. Like all other transport modes, goods transport is also subject to cyclical fluctuations. Trucks are being operated in the private sector. The question of their being fit or over aged has to be judged and enforced by the State Government and not by the Central Government.

New Highways in Karnataka

4524. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the new Highways taken up in Karnataka;

(b) the length of National Highways in the Slate; and

(c) the expenditure incurred during the last three years on the maintenance of Highways in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) During the 9th Five Year Plan, seven number of National Highways aggregating a length of 1574 Km. have been added to National Highway grid in Karnataka State.

(b) About 3570 Km.